

# The HBA N.J. B

## Newsletter

THE VOICE OF THE HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION

VOL. 1 NO. 2

SEPTEMBER 1984

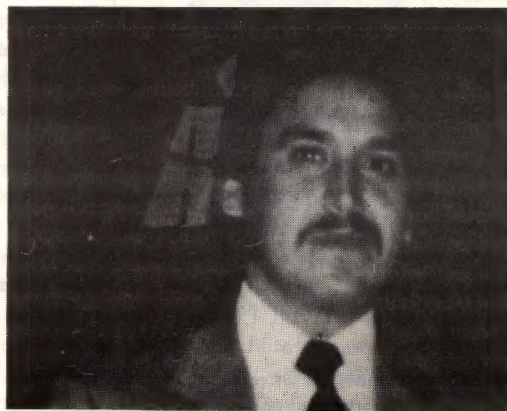
### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

We have always been taught that hard work and dedication will insure success. Most of us were blessed with loving and concerned parents who encouraged us to seek higher education as a vehicle to achieve that so called "American Dream" of wealth and power.

In recent years many young hispanics have chosen to enter the legal profession in hopes of achieving that dream. As revealed in our recent publication of the directory of hispanic attorneys, our numbers have slowly increased so that as of 1984 the number of hispanic attorneys in the State of New Jersey has grown in excess of 158.

Although we can indeed be proud of this fact, our celebration should be short lived as we should not lose sight of the fact that our continued growth has been minuscule in comparison with our anglo counterparts. Let us not forget that during the same period of growth of the hispanic lawyers in the State of New Jersey, the total number of anglo lawyers in the State grew from 13,000 plus in 1973 to 25,000 plus in 1983.

As the above figures demonstrate the number of anglo attorneys has more than doubled in the last decade, making it much more difficult for young hispanic attorneys to compete and survive in the legal marketplace. It is clear that the American Dream is becoming more difficult to fulfill for young hispanic attorneys who upon graduation had visions of wealth and success in the legal profession. While it has always been difficult for minority attorneys entering the marketplace, the situation at the present time has become even more bleak as it has become increasingly difficult to obtain legal employment and even more difficult to survive in the pressurized com-



Hector R. Velazquez, President of the H.B.A. of New Jersey

petitive field of private practice.

If we are to survive and compete in the legal marketplace it is important that we recognize the need to organize and support each other through membership in the Hispanic Bar Association. Although I fully support and encourage our active participation in the State and County Bar Associations, we must understand that it will be a long time before the organized bar will be able to meet the very special needs of minority lawyers in the State of New Jersey.

As president of the Hispanic Bar Association for 1984-1985, I urge each and everyone of you to become active in the H.B.A., so that we may insure the success of various programs and activities planned for the future. I understand that constant pressure and time constraints we must all endure but a few hours of participation in our activities will benefit all of us and is essential if we are to be successful in providing supportive services to the Hispanic Lawyer in the State of New Jersey.



## LEGAL BRIEFS

The 1984 Edition of the H.B.A., Directory of Hispanic Attorneys was published in the Spring. It lists 158 hispanic attorneys on a county by county basis. The directory was sent to all members as well as to various members of the judiciary, the state bar association, and to various state officials. Any hispanic attorney who wishes to have a copy or make corrections or additions for the 1985 edition should send their requests to H.B.A. Directory, 220 Newark, Ave., Jersey City, N.J. 07302.

Margarita Echevarria, a member of the H.B.A. Board of Directors and the first president of the association has been promoted to Associate Counsel at Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Co. in Newark.

Doris Lamourt is now an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer with N.J. Transit in Newark.

Meetings and activities of the H.B.A. Board and Membership for the Fall, 1984 will be as follows:

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Sept. 5  | Board of Directors Meeting<br>6 p.m. at Mutual Benefit Life Bldg.<br>Newark, N.J. |
| Sept. 22 | General Membership Meeting<br>formal notice will be sent to all members           |
| Oct. 10  | Board of Directors Meeting  |
| Nov. 2   | Scholarship Fund Dinner Dance<br>tickets will go on sale in Sept.                 |
| Dec. 14  | Christmas Party   |

## GUEST EDITORIAL

The Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. is now located at 99 Hudson Street in New York City's recently established Public Interest Law Center Building, where its neighbors include the legal staffs of the National Organization for Women, the NAACP, the Asian-American Defense Fund, and so on. As of August 1, the new President of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, Ms. Linda Flores, accepted the responsibility of directing the organization's Education, Litigation and Fund-Raising components. Ms. Flores has not taken on an easy task when one considers that this 11 year old organization has been at the forefront of major litigation, defending the interests of hispanics in the area of voting rights, employment discrimination, civil rights, housing and bilingual education.

Under the capable leadership of this 1977 graduate of Rutgers-Newark Law School, it is expected that the "Fund" has completely left behind the internal difficulties which briefly interrupted its operation last winter. Interviewed by this author, Ms. Flores affirmed that the "difficulties" which plagued this civil rights organization "have been surmounted and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund is back on course." In directing its staff of sixteen, including five attorneys, Ms. Flores mentioned that one of the organization's main concerns for 1984-85 was to strengthen and increase the diversification of its funding sources. As a past recipient of its legal scholarship award, this writer can appreciate what attaining this goal means for the community served by PRLDEF. For this reason, I encourage Hispanic Bar Association members to cooperate in any way they can with the "Fund," including direct monetary

(Continued on Page 4)

### HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY, INC.

220 NEWARK AVENUE  
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

PRESIDENT	HECTOR R. VELAZQUEZ
VICE-PRESIDENT	GRISSELE CAMACHO-PAGAN
SECRETARY	AMILKAR VELEZ-LOPEZ
TREASURER	ALBERTO ULLOA
PAST PRESIDENT	ZULIMA FARBER

BOARD OF TRUSTEES	MARGARITA ECHEVARRIA
	MARTA M. FIGUEROA
	ARIEL A. RODRIGUEZ
	RAUL F. TOUS
	NORBERTO H. YACONO
	JULIO SANCHEZ
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	GRISSELE CAMACHO-PAGAN



## NATIONAL VOTER PARTICIPATION PROJECT INAUGURATED

The National Puerto Rican/Hispanic Voter Participation Project hosted an inaugural reception on August 17, 1984 at its Union, N.J. headquarters. Present were various hispanic leaders involved in voter registration in hispanic communities, including the Chairperson



Board President Miriam Cruz addresses the gathering.

of the project's Board of Directors, Miriam Cruz, and Louis Nunez, President of the National Puerto Rican Coalition. Entertainment was provided by the renowned Puerto Rican guitarist Yomo Toro.

NPR/HVPP is working in six states with large Puerto Rican and Hispanic populations, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Illinois, to increase the participation of Puerto Ricans and Hispanics in the electoral process. The project came about as a result of a seminar sponsored by the National Puerto Rican Coalition in February, 1983 held in Alexandria, Virginia. The seminar, attended by various political activists and students of the political process scrutinized some basic facts of the Puerto Rican political reality:

Puerto Rican voter participation in the U.S. is much lower than its potencial.

Puerto Ricans are grossly underrepresented at all levels of government in this country.

on the other hand, in Puerto Rico the voter participation level is one of the highest in all democratic societies.

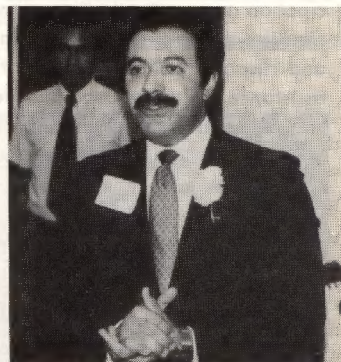
The basic conclusion of the seminar was that in order to increase voter participation in Puerto Rican communities in the continental U.S., an effective national voter re-

gistration organization was needed.

Luis Caban, formerly with the National Puerto Rican Coalition, was selected to head the NPR/HVPP as its president. Mr. Caban spoke with the HBA Newsletter about the project.

### Q. WHY IS THE NPR/HVPP NEEDED?

While the Puerto Rican and Hispanic population of the United States has been increasing steadily and rapidly, and promises to become the largest minority group within the next two decades, on most indicators of life circumstances



Project President Luis Caban welcomes friends and supporters of NPR/HVPP.

Puerto Ricans in the United States are at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. A general consensus exists that Puerto Ricans and Hispanics have had relatively little influence on issues of public policy because of their relative lack of impact on the electoral process.

The principal question confronting the Puerto Rican/Hispanic community is how to translate their growth potential into greater political participation and influence at the local and national levels. The NPR/HVPP was formed to address this question by mobilizing the full political potential of the Puerto Rican and Hispanic community nationally.

### Q. WHAT DOES THE NPR/HVPP DO?

The NPR/HVPP is a national voter participation organization aimed at significantly increasing Puerto Rican and Hispanic voter participation in the United States and activating the full political strength of the Puerto Rican and Hispanic community. The project attempts to overcome those obstacles which have prevented adequate participation by Puerto Ricans and Hispanics in the political life of this country. The NPR/HVPP is a major step in the development of a systematic voter registration and political education effort in Puerto Rican/Hispanic communities across the United States.

The major objectives of the NPR/HVPP are to: sponsor

(Continued on Page 4)



## NATIONAL VOTER PARTICIPATION PROJECT INAUGURATED

(Continued from Page 3)

non-partisan voter registration programs; promote non-partisan citizenship voter education activities; conduct research on the causes and remedies for low voter participation among Puerto Ricans and Hispanics; maintain statistics on registration and voting and on Puerto Rican and Hispanic political participation; provide technical assistance to Puerto Rican and Hispanic communities in planning and training for local voter registration drives; and engage in litigation efforts to rectify voting and electoral abuses.

### Q. WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR NPR/HVPP?

Our long range goal is to increase the number of Puerto Rican and Hispanic political public officials; in the short term we hope to increase the number of hispanic registered voters by providing training and technical assistance to local voter registration projects.

The NPR/HVPP's headquarter is located at 1767 Morris Avenue, Union, N.J. 07083, tel (201) 688-9090.

We gratefully acknowledge the American Title Insurance Company for underwriting the expense of printing this issue of the H.B.A. Newsletter.

**HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY, INC.**  
220 NEWARK AVENUE  
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY 07302

## GUEST EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 2)

contributions. Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund has proven itself to be our champion in the past, and with your help can continue to be so.

I am sure that I am one among many that wish this young, gifted Puerto Rican leader success with the tremendous job that lies ahead. My last remark on Linda, which smacks of alumni chauvinism I can't repress, is "YEAH! RUTGERS! and the CLASS OF 1977."

FFI: The Fund's new number is (212) 219-3360.

Margarita Echevarria

## H.B.A. MEMBERSHIP

If you are not already an H.B.A. member or have not paid your 1984-85 dues, you should send your check together with the following information to H.B.A. 220 Newark Ave., Jersey City, N.J. 07302: Name, Mailing Address, Phone, Business Address and Phone, Date of Bar Admission.

The dues schedule is as follows:

- Active I - any attorney who practices or resides in N.J.,  
- admitted for 2 years or more. Dues - \$30.00.
- Active II - any attorney who practices or resides in N.J.,  
- admitted less than 2 years. Dues - \$20.00.
- Associate - any member of a Bar of any state, territory or  
- the District of Columbia. Dues - \$15.00.
- Law Grad/Student - any graduate of any law school and  
law school students. Dues - \$5.00.